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Security Council

Forty-ninth Year

Provisional

3341st Meeting
Tuesday, 1 March 1994, 6 p.m.
New York

President:	Mr. Mérimée	(*France*)
Members:	Argentina	Mr. Cardenas
	Brazil	Mr. Sardenberg
	China	Mr. Li Zhaoxing
	Czech Republic	Mr. Kovanda
	Djibouti	Mr. Olhaye
	New Zealand	Mr. van Bohemen
	Nigeria	Mr. Ayewah
	Oman	Mr. Al-Khussaiby
	Pakistan	Mr. Khan
	Russian Federation	Mr. Lozinskiy
	Rwanda	Mr. Abimana
	Spain	Mr. Pedauye
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Wood
	United States of America	Mr. Boardman

Agenda

1. Adoption of the agenda

2. The situation in the occupied Arab territories

   Letter dated 25 February 1994 from the Permanent Representative of Egypt to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/1994/222)

   Letter dated 25 February 1994 from the Permanent Representative of Pakistan to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/1994/223)

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* Reissued for technical reasons.

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The meeting was called to order at 6.10 p.m.

Expression of thanks to the retiring President

The President *(interpretation from French):* As this is the first meeting of the Security Council for the month of March, I should like to take this opportunity to pay tribute, on behalf of the Council, to His Excellency Mr. Roble Olhaye, Permanent Representative of Djibouti to the United Nations, for his service as President of the Security Council for the month of February 1994. I am sure I speak for all members of the Security Council in expressing deep appreciation to Ambassador Olhaye for the great diplomatic skill and unfailing courtesy with which he conducted the Council's business last month.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in the occupied Arab territories

Letter dated 25 February 1994 from the Permanent Representative of Egypt to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/1994/222)

Letter dated 25 February 1994 from the Permanent Representative of Pakistan to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/1994/223)

The President *(interpretation from French):* In accordance with the decisions taken at the 3340th meeting, I invite the representative of Israel to take a place at the Council table; I invite the Permanent Observer of Palestine to take a place at the Council table; I invite the representatives of Afghanistan, Algeria, Egypt, Greece, Indonesia, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Malaysia, Qatar, Sudan, the Syrian Arab Republic, Tunisia, Turkey and the United Arab Emirates to take the places reserved for them at the side of the Council Chamber.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Yaacobi (Israel) took a place at the Council table; Mr. Al-Kidwa (Palestine) took a place at the Council table; Mr. Farhadi (Afghanistan), Mr. Lamamra (Algeria), Mr. Elaraby (Egypt), Mr. Exarchos (Greece), Mr. Nasier (Indonesia), Mr. Khoshroo (Islamic Republic of Iran), Mr. Bataineh (Jordan), Mr. Abulhasan (Kuwait), Mr. Makkawi (Lebanon), Mr. Elhouderi (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya), Mr. Razali (Malaysia), Mr. Al-Ni'mah (Qatar), Mr. Yassin (Sudan), Mr. Awad (Syrian Arab Republic), Mr. Abdellah (Tunisia), Mr. Batu (Turkey) and Mr. Samhan (United Arab Emirates) took the places reserved for them at the side of the Council Chamber.

The President *(interpretation from French):* I should like to inform the Council that I have received letters from the representatives of Bahrain, Bangladesh, Japan, Mauritania and Ukraine in which they request to be invited to participate in the discussion of the item on the Council's agenda. In accordance with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite those representatives to participate in the discussion without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Al-Faihani (Bahrain), Mr. Majid (Bangladesh), Mr. Motomura (Japan), Mr. Ould Mohamed Mahmoud (Mauritania) and Mr. Khandogy (Ukraine) took the places reserved for them at the side of the Council Chamber.

The President *(interpretation from French):* I should like to inform the Council that I have received a letter dated 1 March 1994 from the Chairman of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, which reads as follows:

> "In my capacity as Chairman of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, I have the honour to request that I be invited to participate in the debate on the agenda item 'The situation in the occupied Arab territories', under rule 39 of the provisional rules of procedure of the Security Council."

On previous occasions, the Security Council has extended invitations to representatives of other United Nations bodies in connection with the consideration of matters on its agenda. In accordance with past practice in this matter, I propose that the Council extend an invitation under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure to the Chairman of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

The Security Council will now resume its consideration of the item on the agenda. Members of the Council have before them document S/1994/231, which

contains the text of a letter dated 28 February 1994 from the Permanent Representative of Greece to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, transmitting the text of a declaration of the European Union.

Members of the Council have also received photocopies of a letter dated 28 February 1994 from the Permanent Representative of the Sudan to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council, which will be issued as document S/1994/236.

The first speaker is the representative of Afghanistan. I invite him to take a place at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Farhadi *(Afghanistan) (interpretation from French):* As the first speaker as you begin your presidency of the Security Council on this first day of March, I should also like, Sir, to be the first to congratulate you. The Council now has to decide on some most serious and complex issues, and we have every confidence in your abilities as an experienced diplomat and in your wealth of knowledge of these issues to enable you to guide the work of the Council to a successful conclusion.

With the deepest pain and great indignation, the entire world has condemned the massacre committed in Al-Khalil, or Hebron, before sunrise on Friday, 25 February, the fifteenth day of Ramadan, the month of fasting. We are here first and foremost to raise our voices in echo of the voices of vast numbers of human beings.

It should be clearly understood that in occupied Palestinian territory those armed by the occupier are shooting not only adolescents who throw stones at the jeeps of the occupying army, but also those who fast, as Abraham and Moses fasted, and those who prostrate themselves before God, the common God of the three Abrahamic religions.

Hebron is called Al-Khalil by Palestinians, Arabs and Muslims throughout the world, and Al-Khalil means "close friend". Why "close friend"? Because that is where the tomb of Abraham is found. Consulting the Koran, we find that Sura 4, verse 125 - which I wish to quote in English, as well as in French, and also in Arabic, which is now an official language of the United Nations - says:

"For God did take
Abraham for a friend."

The same verse states that every believer should follow the religion of Abraham - "*millat Ibrahim*" - the religion of a *hanif*, that is, of an upright person. For Muslims, Abraham is the spiritual patriarch of all the sincere believers of mankind - "*al-nas*" - as is stated in the last verse of Sura 22 of the Holy Book of Islam, a Book where the name of Abraham is mentioned 70 times.

This is why the *haram* - the precinct of this place of Islamic pilgrimage in the city of Al-Khalil, the precinct that was desecrated at dawn on Friday by a terrorist with the infidel's heart in a massacre of believers who had already begun their fast and were prostrating themselves before the Lord of Abraham, who is also their Lord - is the most sacred site in Palestinian territory, after, obviously, the Haram al-Sharif, which is the holy precinct of the city of Al-Quds, or Jerusalem.

It might be said that the points I have just made are religious points. But even lay people, whose way of life is prevalent here at the United Nations, will find in them certain socio-political facts of great importance.

Numerically speaking, the abominable massacre of 25 February set a record. Historically speaking, this is not the first time we have condemned such an occurrence. Indeed, three and a half years ago, on 8 October 1990, in the Haram al-Sharif, this holy sanctuary of the city of Al-Quds, or Jerusalem, violence committed by the Israeli security forces left more than 20 dead and more than 150 wounded among Palestinian civilians who were in the act of praying. Security Council resolution 672 (1990) called upon Israel, the occupying Power, to abide scrupulously by its legal obligations and responsibilities upon under the Fourth Geneva Convention, applicable to all the territories occupied by Israel since 1967 - including, clearly, Jerusalem.

However, for a quarter of a century now, Israeli propaganda has generally tried to suggest to the inhabitants of settlements that they were living in territory that belonged to them. This unofficial attitude of the Israeli authorities prepared the ground for ideological indoctrination that runs counter to the whole purpose of the peace process now under way. Since the Palestinian civil population has been living in the same territories for centuries, those preaching hate for the peace process were able to gain tremendous influence, particularly in the settlements, which were set up under military occupation.

It is therefore important, first and foremost, for anyone trying to promote the continuation of the peace process to disarm ideologically the fundamentalist extremists in these settlements and to convince them that the land on which they have been installing themselves

since 1967 is occupied temporarily and unjustly. It belongs, in fact, to the Palestinians, who have been living there for many centuries.

Anyone who strives for peace while insisting on maintaining settlements in territory occupied militarily, and who supports the settlers and their actions by means of armed force will never achieve his goals of peace. This is the lesson that we learned from the end of colonialism in the twentieth century, and it is also the lesson of thousands of years of the history of nations.

In our century, in this age of automatic weapons, instruments that make it possible to kill a whole crowd of human beings in a few seconds, it is important to start by disarming these settlers, whether or not they be psychopaths or lunatics.

For the moment, the massacre at dawn on Friday has profoundly harmed not only the Palestinians but also the credibility of the peace process. For the future, these settlements are centres for terrorists and have been rightly called time bombs that could destroy the entire peace effort.

The massacre of 25 February has demonstrated irrefutably that the peace process is totally incompatible with the actions of the armed occupation forces of armed settlers, whether or not they wear the uniform of Israeli reservists. Let us recall that this point has already been made. In paragraph 4 of resolution 681 (1990), of 20 December 1990, the Israeli Government is called upon to accept the *de jure* applicability of the Fourth Geneva Convention of 1949 to all the territories occupied by Israel since 1967 and to abide scrupulously by the provisions of that Convention.

Furthermore, it is an actual fact that the settlers, armed not only with automatic weapons but also with certain political plans, are working under the benevolent and complaisant gaze of the occupying army. I say "political plans" because among these settlers there are certain centres of hatred. Consequently, there is a potential for sabotage of the entire Palestinian-Israeli peace process.

The acts of these settlers in particular and the occupation security forces in general are contrary to the principles clearly enunciated by the current Government of Israel, and hence to the Oslo negotiations of August 1993 and the Washington Declaration of Principles of 13 September 1993.

The need to protect the Palestinian civilians in the occupied Palestinian territories, including Al-Quds (Jerusalem), not only is based on international law but is also required and made imperative by a practical and concrete situation which the Government of Israel should recognize as being of prime importance.

What is the solution to all this? Three consecutive stages can be clearly envisaged.

First, the extremists, the fundamentalists, among the settlers must be disarmed immediately.

Secondly, the rest of the settlers must be disarmed immediately thereafter.

Thirdly - that is, in a subsequent stage - there must be an accelerated dismantling of the Israeli settlements in all the occupied Palestinian territories, including Al-Quds (Jerusalem). This might, of course, require the building of housing within Israel to which these settlers can be transferred. The ways and means of carrying out such a plan would be part of the peace negotiations.

At the same time, international protection of the Palestinian civilian population is clearly necessary. The duration of such protection will be a function of the success of the peace process - the quicker that process is completed, the shorter will be the time needed for such protection. This international protection would be a positive factor, militating in favour of satisfactory progress in the peace process.

In conclusion, an overwhelming consequence for the prospects for peace would seem to be the need to revise fundamentally the agenda for the ongoing peace negotiations - particularly to reorder the priorities radically. The most urgent priority now is clearly the need to afford protection to the Palestinian civilians in the occupied territories. All the parties involved, including the United Nations, must deal with this. It is a new chapter in the book concerning respect for the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people - first and foremost their right to live and to survive, and then their right to independence.

The President *(interpretation from French):* I thank the representative of Afghanistan for the kind words he addressed to me.

The next speaker is the representative of the United Arab Emirates. I invite him to take a place at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Samhan *(United Arab Emirates) (interpretation from Arabic):* I should like to begin by expressing to you, Sir, the congratulations of the delegation of the United Arab Emirates on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for this month. We are certain that your diplomatic skills and your experience will contribute to the Council's achievement of positive results.

I have the honour also of expressing our appreciation and paying a tribute to your predecessor, the Permanent Representative of the sister country of Djibouti, for the efficient and able way in which he presided over the Council's deliberations last month.

I wish also to express to you, Mr. President, and to the other members of the Council our thanks and appreciation for having convened the Council and for giving us the opportunity of addressing it.

We were shocked, indeed stunned, by the magnitude of the tragedy that befell our Palestinian brothers as a result of the heinous carnage perpetrated by an evil, criminal Israeli hand against persons praying at Al-Haram Al-Ibrahimi at dawn on Friday, 25 February 1994. The people and the Government of the United Arab Emirates have condemned in the strongest possible terms this criminal massacre that took a toll of more than 50 martyrs and resulted in the wounding of hundreds of other Palestinians.

Since this massacre took place, many Palestinians have been killed or wounded by Israeli military forces. Their only crime was that they were expressing their indignation at this heinous act perpetrated against their kith and kin in Al-Khalil. Their only crime was that they were demanding that an end be put to the Israeli occupation of their homeland and that they be given an opportunity to exercise their inalienable, legitimate national rights, like all the other peoples of the world that have attained independence and rid themselves of the yoke of foreign occupation.

The criminal transgression against the sacred Al-Haram Al-Ibrahimi and the murder of the Muslims praying there was a heinous crime, totally incompatible with the sanctity of the Holy Places which are held in such high esteem by all the divinely revealed religions. It was also a flagrant violation of international humanitarian law.

This bloody carnage cannot be regarded as an isolated event. It is linked with two similar events: the arson at the Holy Al Aqsa Mosque in El-Quds (Jerusalem) in 1969, and the killing of 20 persons and the wounding of hundreds of others at the Haram Al-Sharif in Jerusalem in 1990 by Israeli military forces, without any regard or respect for the fact that the Holy Places are sacred to millions of Muslims in the world.

Israel's record since its occupation of the Palestinian territories is replete with examples of the desecration of holy shrines. Anyone who analyzes these three crimes against Muslim places of worship will conclude that Israel is either unable or unwilling to provide adequate protection for the holy shrines and for those worshipping in them. Whatever the reason may be, that position is untenable.

The Israeli authorities take no measures to prevent extremist Israeli groups from perpetrating their terrorist crimes and acts of aggression against the Palestinian people. To the contrary, the Israeli authorities permit those groups and other settlers to carry weapons, on the pretext of self-defence. But all the evidence indicates that those weapons have been used only to attack unarmed Palestinian civilians.

Israel is attempting to shirk its responsibility for this carnage, on the pretext that the perpetrator was deranged. We reject that argument, both in form and in content. It was the Israeli authorities themselves who permitted him to carry weapons; it was they who permitted him to enter the mosque during prayers; they took no swift, effective action to stop the carnage. That proves that the Israeli authorities condone the crimes perpetrated by the settlers against the Palestinian people. Moreover, preliminary reports indicate that some Israeli soldiers actually participated in the murders.

The Israeli authorities confiscated Palestinian lands and have permitted the establishment of settlements on those lands. They have transferred tens of thousands of settlers from all over the world to live there, in total contravention of the provisions of the Fourth Geneva Convention of 1949. That policy is in flagrant violation of United Nations resolutions declaring the settlements illegal, and of the norms of international conduct, the United Nations Charter and the rules of international law.

In the face of this situation in the occupied Palestinian territories, which is deteriorating owing to Israeli practices against the Palestinian civilian population, the international community, and in particular the Security Council, cannot continue to be a helpless spectator content with declarations of condemnation and resolutions of denunciation. It has the duty to take decisive steps to guarantee the security and safety of the Palestinian people.

Hence, the Government of the United Arab Emirates calls upon the international community, and especially the Security Council, fully to shoulder its responsibility under the Charter and under the rules and norms of international law by adopting an unambiguous decision to protect the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territories, including Al-Quds Al-Sharif. It must also seek the implementation of Security Council resolution 681 (1990) and appoint an international commission to investigate the circumstances under which the carnage was perpetrated in Al-Haram Al-Ibrahimi in Al-Khalil, taking whatever steps are required to enable that commission to discharge its mandate.

Recent statements by Israel regarding its intention to disarm some settlers are not enough to prevent the repetition of such crimes and carnage against the Palestinian people. We therefore consider it important - indeed, necessary - that all settlers without exception be disarmed. That measure must be implemented in the context of a policy leading to the dismantling of existing settlements and the return of the settlers to Israel, in conformity with Security Council resolution 465 (1980), paragraph 6 of which calls for the dismantling of existing settlements.

That is the right approach for the Israeli authorities to take if they are indeed seriously interested in achieving a just, comprehensive, peaceful settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict and the question of Palestine.

The President *(interpretation from French):* I thank the representative of the United Arab Emirates for the kind words he addressed to me.

The next speaker is the representative of the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya. I invite him to take a place at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Elhouderi *(Libyan Arab Jamahiriya) (interpretation from Arabic):* Let me begin, Sir, by saying how pleased I am to see you presiding over the work of the Security Council for this month, which coincides with the holy month of Ramadan. It is a time when the holy places are filled and Muslims - their faces glowing with a sense of trust and serenity - seek, through prayer, fasting and good works, to come closer to God.

I am sure, Sir, that your ability and diplomatic skill will enable the Council to do a remarkable job in the face of these tragic events.

I wish also to congratulate your predecessor, Ambassador Olhaye of Djibouti, who guided the work of the Council last month with great skill.

The events the Council is considering today constitute a crime of collective extermination that in a brief moment resulted in 60 deaths and some 300 injuries among Palestinians. A Zionist gang led by an extremist American Jew committed this crime. This gang is motivated by the hatred that infects their hearts so deeply that they are blind to the holiness of a House of God. This gang preyed upon the trust and serenity of the worshippers in order to overwhelm them with gunfire, and thus achieved their premeditated criminal aims.

Following the crime, the malevolent masters of propaganda announced that the crime had been committed by a single criminal. That constitutes an attempt to harbour criminals and save them from punishment, and to conceal the plans to terrorize and exterminate the Palestinian people. This propaganda reiterates that the criminal was a madman; we are accustomed to hearing such claims following each crime.

But the evidence shows that the perpetrators are part of a gang of the followers of Rabbi Meir Kahane, a terrorist, extremist Jew.

This gang has a long history of attacking places of worship. They were the ones who set fire to the holy mosque of Jerusalem in an attempt to blow it up. They are also the ones who attacked Al-Haram Al-Ibrahimi several times in the past, opening fire on worshippers and stealing its historic wealth. If they are indeed madmen they should be kept in hospitals to prevent them from bringing about such suffering. Such horrible carnage could not have been brought about without premeditation and without protection from the Zionist entity in occupied Palestine, because we know that Al-Haram Al-Ibrahimi is under the protection of the Zionist army. Where was that army at the time this barbarous act was committed? The Zionist army did not remain idle: it opened fire on the Palestinians who had gathered in the courtyard of the local hospital in Hebron to give blood or to seek news of their loved ones. The Zionist entity could not commit such terrorist criminal acts without the moral and material support of the United States of America, which turns a blind eye to the Zionist entity's violations of human rights and, indeed, impedes efforts to bring it to heel. The United States is interested only in the continuation of the peace talks.

This was a premeditated and organized criminal act, carried out with sophisticated weapons. It was a flagrant,

violent act of aggression that typifies what the Palestinians have to endure every day.

While the Zionist entity denounces these acts today, others remain silent and even join the funeral cortege of their victims. One may rightly wonder whether we are really on the road to peace, because, so far, that road leads only to the interests of the Zionist entity: To speak of peace and security is to speak of the peace and security enjoyed by that entity. But there is no security or peace for the Palestinian people. The Zionist entity, thanks to American support, is already enjoying the fruits of peace, even before peace has been established. There are agreements to provide American weapons. There are trade agreements to ensure the security of that State, whereas the Palestinian people only finds destruction, death and expulsion.

The Arab peoples in general and the children with stones in particular cannot believe in such a process; they cannot accept a peace based on inequality and oppression. The Arab peoples will support a just peace, one which is aimed at freeing Palestinian and occupied Arab territories from occupation and extremism so that Muslims, Christians and Jews may live together in a democratic State, as is possible today in South Africa. That is the only solution likely to bring about a just peace, and not these false and shameful initiatives.

The Security Council is today considering a flagrant act of aggression - a barbaric terrorist act which threatens international peace and security. The Security Council must shoulder its responsibilities with the same enthusiasm and determination it has shown in other cases which have been considered to be threats to international peace and security. The Council is therefore faced with a difficult test today. It has but two options open to it: to continue with the policy of double standards imposed by most of the permanent members, a policy which has brought about inequality and destroyed the Council's credibility or to shoulder its responsibility for safeguarding international peace and security by implementing the Charter of the United Nations.

The peace of the Palestinian people and its security are seriously endangered. Hence the Security Council is in duty bound to adopt forthwith the following measures to guarantee to that people its right to live in peace and security: firstly, the organization of an international enquiry within the framework of the Security Council to ascertain the identities of the perpetrators of the crime; secondly, protection of the Palestinians from attacks by settlers; thirdly, confiscation of the settlers' weapons and withdrawal of the Zionist army from Palestinian towns and villages; fourthly, the dismantlement of Zionist settlements, which are in fact citadels of terrorism and provocation.

If the Security Council fails to assume its responsibility with resolve and persists in its hypocritical policy, it will mean that Arab and Palestinian blood is cheap and does not merit the interest of the Council.

The President *(interpretation from French)*: I thank the representative of the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya for his kind words addressed to me.

The next speaker is the representative of Lebanon. I invite him to take a place at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Makkawi *(Lebanon)*: Sir, allow me first to extend, on behalf of my delegation, sincerest congratulations on your assumption of the presidency for this month. In Lebanon, we are all well aware of your commitment to the cause of peace in the Middle East and are confident that the work of the Council will be conducted most efficiently under your wise and proven leadership.

I should also like to thank your predecessor, my brother and friend, the Permanent Representative of the Republic of Djibouti, for the exemplary manner in which he conducted the affairs of the Council during the month of February.

In addition, I avail myself of this opportunity to express Lebanon's deep gratitude to the Secretary-General for his expeditious handling of this crisis, and for his wisdom in offering to dispatch United Nations observers to the occupied Palestinian territories.

The whole world is stunned by the horrendous massacre at Al-Haram Al-Ibrahimi in Al-Khalil, Hebron. This is the first time a man has entered a place of worship during the holy month of Ramadan and gunned down hundreds of people prostrated in prayer. Clearly, the root of this tragedy is the continuation of the Israeli occupation, the insidious growth of settlements and the sustained influx of Jewish fundamentalists into the occupied territories. Peace in the Middle East cannot be achieved when Palestinians are allotted only 20 per cent of their historic land and when that 20 per cent is traumatized by 144 illegal settlements within the Palestinian homeland.

These settlements are armed camps and hotbeds of extremism openly hostile to the indigenous population. The

world was shocked this weekend to learn that some Jews in Israel and the occupied territories proudly associate themselves with the man who committed this macabre act. This sad truth is underscored by the fact that a thousand fundamentalists attended his funeral procession and by the rabbi who eulogized the murderer with the words that

> "One million Arabs are not worth a Jewish fingernail."

All of us would like to believe that this was the act of a lone, crazed gunman, but the fact remains that Baruch Goldstein was the product of a society and ideology supported by former Israeli Governments and funded by ultra-Zionist groups. Some 300 dead and wounded are hardly the work of one man, a fact which speaks of complicity in the crime.

The Government of Israel, despite its involvement in the Middle East peace process and its signing of the Declaration of Principles in Washington, has done nothing to discourage settlements or check extremist activity in the territories. Instead it has engaged in tactical manoeuvres aimed at postponing an Israeli troop withdrawal from Gaza and Jericho, such as its petty arguments over Palestinian troop sizes, border controls and Jericho's boundaries. Consequently, the 13 December deadline for withdrawal from Gaza and Jericho has come and gone with no substantive progress achieved.

Now, with the news of the massacre, Palestinians are finding that hope is giving way to anger and desperation. Since 1967 Israel, the occupying Power, has failed to provide protection for the civilian population under its occupation, as it is its obligation to do under the Fourth Geneva Convention of 1949. Furthermore, with the growth of militant Judaism in the occupied lands, it is incumbent upon Israel to redouble its efforts to provide this protection. However, Israel's characteristic negligence and brutality is attested to by the fact that Israeli soldiers not only facilitated the massacre by allowing the gunman to enter the mosque, but were responsible for some of the deaths at the scene, as reported by the news media. And, as if this were not enough, soldiers have killed many demonstrators.

Lebanon knows what it is to suffer under the brutal policies and practices of occupation, because we have endured the Israeli occupation of southern Lebanon for the past 16 years. Not a single day passes without the death of innocent civilians and the destruction of homes and property. None the less, the people of Lebanon are thoroughly convinced of the need for a just, lasting and comprehensive peace in the Middle East, which must encompass the Lebanese, Syrian, Jordanian and Palestinian tracks.

However, peace cannot prevail so long as the occupation continues, the settlements remain and Jewish extremists continue to threaten the security of Palestinians in the West Bank, Gaza and East Jerusalem. As has been echoed time and time here, the need for a just and equitable solution to the Palestinian problem is the root of the broader Arab-Israeli conflict. Such a solution is the only hope for stability in the region and for the triumph of moderation.

Peace in the Middle East cannot be achieved unless the Palestinians are granted their legitimate national rights and Israel withdraws from the Palestinian and Syrian territories in accordance with Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973), and from southern Lebanon, in accordance with Security Council resolution 425 (1978).

The reality of the need for a comprehensive peace is demonstrated by the fact that the effects of the massacre have been felt throughout the Arab and Muslim worlds. In Lebanon, Syria, Jordan and Egypt demonstrators rallied vehemently against the massacre, casting a dark shadow over the peace process. The Governments of Lebanon, Syria and Jordan responded by suspending talks with Israel which had been scheduled for this week.

Also, in Lebanon, just two days after the massacre, a bomb exploded during a church service, killing nine innocent worshippers and wounding more than 60 people. This proves that the forces which have tried over the years to destabilize Lebanon and undermine our unity and national reconciliation are behind this bombing, which they carried out in order to divert attention away from the massacre at Al-Haram Al-Ibrahimi in Al-Khalil. However, they will not succeed. Lebanon is committed to the peace process and is strong enough to overcome this conspiracy. The Government and the people of Lebanon are standing firm to ensure that the tranquillity that has reigned in Lebanon for the last three years will continue. Furthermore, we will do everything in our power to bring the criminals to justice.

At this critical juncture the Government of Israel must make a decision upon which the fate of the Middle East peace process will depend: does it want peace enough to dismantle the illegal settlements and bring back 130,000 settlers to Israel proper, or does it want to jettison the whole peace process and face what is quickly becoming a rising and insurmountable wave of religious extremism? Israel's condemnation of the massacre is not enough. Nor

are its promises to arrest, disarm and restrict the movement of a handful of extremists. These empty gestures will do little to affect the situation on the ground unless all settlers are disarmed. After all, if settlers in the territories have no confidence in Israeli military protection, then why should the Palestinians? Either allow all civilians in the territories to carry arms, or disarm them all.

I should like to conclude by saying that, in addition to the immediate disarming of settlers, what is urgently needed is for the Security Council to establish an international presence in the West Bank, Gaza and East Jerusalem to ensure the safety and security of the Palestinian population. Lebanon joins those Member States calling for the establishment of a temporary international presence in the occupied territories in accordance with Security Council resolution 681 (1990), and as provided for in the Declaration of Principles as a measure to be taken prior to final-status negotiations. Until that time, the international community must bear in mind that Israeli settlements are, first and foremost, illegal. Secondly, they are an obstacle to the peace process. And, finally, we have learned the lesson that they are time bombs whose explosions reverberate throughout the region.

The President *(interpretation from French)*: I thank the representative of Lebanon for his kind words addressed to me.

There are a number of speakers remaining on my list. In view of the lateness of the hour, I intend to adjourn the meeting now. With the concurrence of the members of the Council, the next meeting of the Security Council to continue consideration of the item on the agenda will be fixed in consultation with the members of the Council.

Before adjourning the meeting, I should like, on behalf of the members of the Council, to express our warm thanks and appreciation to the Assistant Secretary-General, Mr. Benon Sevan, for his exemplary service to the Council. We wish him well as he takes up his new functions in the Organization.

The meeting rose at 7.15 p.m.